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222306Z Aug 05

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001744

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, AUGUST 22, 2005

1. Op-ed by Ilsa Diaz Zelaya in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "Tiempo" on 8/15, entitled "CAFTA-DR Shouldn't Be Feared." "In 1983 the U.S. government decided to benefit Central American and Caribbean agricultural workers and exporters through an initiative that has allowed the free trade of our products to the U.S. market [Caribbean Basin Initiative]."

"At an annual conference in Miami, U.S. investors and producers could meet with us, the benefited countries. These conferences brought all kinds of investments to Honduras. For example, Sea Board Marine built a melon plantation and a shrimp plant in the country. After that the company established itself in Comayagua with one of Honduras' first vegetable plantations. Comayagua now has thousands of jobs, all as a consequence of the numerous businesses that came to the country."

"In 1990, when the 'Fyffes Group' came into Honduras, prices and the workplace changed as the U.S. dollar entered the economy. While the banana plantations had paid in Lempiras for years, this group started paying in U.S. dollars, breaking all traditions and ways of thinking."

"We should face this new opportunity of CAFTA with good organization, bravery, and effort, and always keep in mind that more than just the U.S. can receive our products, as we have already had good success in the European and Asian markets."

"We should forget the negative commentators that don't recognize that this is a historical moment for our country, and we should take advantage of this valuable opportunity."

Williard